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Integration and Disintegration in European Societies – Identity and Social Issues at the time of the Globalization of Cultures and Economical crisis

Integracja i dezintegracja w społeczeństwach europejskich – Tożsamość i problemy społeczne w dobie globalizacji kultury i kryzysu ekonomicznego

Streszczenie

Artykuł zamierza definiować pojęcie „wielokulturowości" w sposób dynamiczny, w sytuacji kiedy jest ono przeważnie używane po to, aby określać tylko widoczne, istniejące różnice między grupami etnicznymi lub religijnymi. Nie można pominąć faktu, że różne grupy narodowościowe lub religijne historycznie rozwijały odmienne kultury polityczne i programy społeczne, które w konsekwencji umożliwiły postęp. W czasach globalizacji, możemy zauważyć zubożenie poszczególnych religii, ideologii i kultur narodowych jako ucieleśnienia wartości twórczych i alternatywnych. Powstaje sytuacja blokująca postęp ludzki i przyczyniająca się do rozwoju frustracji oraz napięć między grupami. Proces nasila się szczególnie jeżeli wielokulturowość zostaje zredukowana tylko do różnic zewnętrznych, podlegających procesom dominującej globalizacji kultury.

Słowa kluczowe: wielokulturowość, kultura, religia, etniczność, postmodernizm, rozwój, naród

Abstract

This article tries to redefine the concept of multiculturalism as a potentially dynamic one, in a situation where this word is mainly used to qualify visible differences between ethnical or religious groups, not taking into account the fact that, historically, different national or religious groups developed different political cultures and social programmes that helped humankind to progress. At the time of globalisation, we observe the impoverishment of religions, ideologies and nations as carriers of alternative values and this created a situation blocking human

progress, creating then frustrations and tensions between groups reduced to their visible differences and all submitted to the same dominant culture.

We shall examine in this article from an historical perspective the real meaning of multiculturalism that we oppose to the conceptions of clash of civilizations (Huntington, 1993), end of history (earlier Fukuyama, 1992) but also post-modernism (Maffesoli, 1992, 2012, 2015) since we think that « liquid modernity » (Bauman, 2000) or « late modernity », is still modernity but a reduced modernity restricted to pure technical progress where leading elites imposed on nations to resign from the main objectives of both Enlightened ideologies and Messianic religions tending to promote spiritual, social and human progress carried on by a better human being, a better citizen, a « human divinely human » (Barbusse, 1927) promoting a society of complete justice for all. Our thought is based on the observation that every dynamic and creative society at a given scientific, technical, economical and social stage of development is from the very beginning of Human history a society characterized by :

> » cohesion, which does not mean a society without internal contradictions. It's even the opposite, since contradictions constitute a driving force for social development,
> » a society able to integrate different ideological, religious, cultural, social, national or ethnical trends in a coherent and mutually dynamic process.

We could observe this phenomenon and this recurrent historical rule at the peak time of such political structures like the old Persian, Roman, Muslim, Chinese, Ottoman, etc, empires, as it was also the case with the « Polish Commonwealth » or during the « glorious age » of the British Empire, the French Republic, USA or USSR. Here we are talking about creativity and social dynamics, and not necessarily about an idealistic idyllic life for all but a society opening some perspectives for all. On the contrary, ethnically, religious or ideologically monolithic States are coherent but, in general, they stay out of the main historical development trends. Culturally pluralistic States are then more creative and progressive but they tend to be more fragile when they face crisis, especially economical or social one, when they can be torn by strong ethnical, religious and identity tensions. But their problems do not come most of the time because of their cultural diversity but because the crisis situation is blocking development prospects and social mobility, what creates then a situation causing fossilization and disintegration, what leads to the development of individualism on one side and regression toward basic and primitive networks of solidarity : clans, tribes and ethnic-religious circles on the other side.

Social ossification constitutes the basic cause of crisis

When social and economical crisis happens in such societies, diverse up till then and mutually creative ideological, religious, cultural, national, regional groups tend to curl

up, to mistrust others and to compete one against the other in a situation where each group prefers to catch for itself jobs, consumer goods and services which tend to be more and more simultaneously rare and with an increasing poor quality and operating time. This process of mutual exclusion and self-enclosure does not come in fact from diversity which was earlier considered as something positive but it comes from the blockade happening in a given economical, social and structural model at a certain stage of development, when egoism and lack of imagination of the elites are linked with the passivity and pessimism of the masses.

The old Polish « Republic of Two Nations » for example did not enter into crisis because here we could find legally tolerated all existing without exception in the World monotheistic faith and numerous Slavic and non Slavic ethnical groups, from Jews to Tatars, from Armenians to Germans, from Poles to Ruthenians, etc. We can observe on the contrary that Poland did begin to develop to a higher stage from the moment when those different groups began to integrate themselves within the frame of a new multicultural entity under an open-minded to social, political, religious and ideological diversity Polish catholic noble core. Crisis began later, when nobility tended to marginalize other social groups and when nobility itself tended to be dominated by a closed caste of magnates (Davies, 2014, Minalto, 2015). When townsburghers were also forbidden access to nobility, when cities could not any more integrate people from the countryside, when administrative functions were reserved almost only for Catholics, and only Latin ones, and when Lords exploited the competition between Jews and bourgeois so the urban economy could not compete with rural production put on a position of monopoly under a concentration process controlled by few families. This situation of overconcentration of power lead Poland to decay at the very same moment when in Western Europe cities were developing, bourgeoisie was growing, tolerance was finally accepted after religious wars and capitalism began to develop. Every social group and every religious group, from the top of the catholic aristocracy down to the non catholic peasants began then to live in Poland their own way in a situation where the strongest became richer and more powerful and the poorest and weakest poorer and weaker. Competition was not based on different social, ideological or theological views then, but on strictly superficial ritual and identity, ethnic-religious, differences. We have here to make a clear difference between religion in itself which is a faith linked with an elaborated theology and philosophy of life for both collectivity and individuals, and its reduced caricature based on purely external and superficial identity features. Christian universalism simultaneously with neighbouring religions of that time was reduced in Poland to different mental ghettos reserved for the privileged and then, as a copy reaction, also the unprivileged. At the very moment when Western Europe was renouncing to crusades and religious wars, even if promoting colonialism but under a quite large social mobility, Eastern Europe renounced from its earlier tolerance, and concentrated on an economical model based on reinforced serfdom linked with the monopoly of the wheat production (Blanc, 1974, Makkai, 1981).

Nowadays we are experiencing at a global scale, especially in Western countries, a situation looking quite similar. We observe social, ethnical, religious problems in Europe and USA because there is an economical and structural crisis linked with a mental and social one. Social mobility and social progress are blocked. People become

mutually exclusive within the Global market, what leads them toward individualism, egoism and the search for security within closed circles in competition to get jobs, money, housing, services and consumer goods. People in this situation do not oppose any more to promote liberalism, socialism or another programme for a better way of development, people do not oppose to promote Catholicism, protestantism, Islam or Judaism to make them better people for the whole community and to get to a paradise of brotherhood after death, but they fight most often so people from « my » family, « my » party, « my » parish or « my » visible identity group take first an office, a job, a powerful institution, ...or to destroy other « more competitive » identity groups, or countries. Individualism promoted by the media and powerful groups lead almost automatically to ethnic-religious egoism in a situation where there are fewer and fewer jobs, houses, consumer goods of good quality, etc. Our societies are looking more and more like a « multitribal » collection of closed « communities », gated cities, ghettos and individuals but they are not fundamentally really « multi-/cultural » then. In a situation when in Europe, State is giving less and less guarantees for a correct life, identity circles are often giving to the dispossessed the impression of belongings and solidarity. Instead of what theorised Margareth Thatcher, human beings are social creatures, and when political entities, local neighbourhoods and productive units are not responding any more to this need, tribal or neo-tribal ones are filling the vacuum.

Lack of political perspectives coming from the lack of cultural creativeness

In this situation, political parties, social organizations, religious structures are not any more able to compete for the promotion of alternative and creative social values or to convert because they believe they represent a better option for all, but most of the time they reduce their ambitions to conquer more influence in favour of « theirs ». Wars in Yugoslavia, in Northern Ireland or in Syria were not organized to convert people to Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Protestantism or wahhabi Islam. Israel is not fighting to transform in Jews the Palestinians, Russia is not tending any more to save humankind and promote world progress and American democracy does not plan to introduce a world democracy for its Global empire but concentrates on « market freedom » for its transnational enterprises within a world economy that should be unified according to the market « Law » calculated so to promote the « happy few » (Giraud, 2012). Present wars are not organized to promote a better social system than the existing one, even when they are supposed to be carried on against a « dictator » most often accused of being « an evil man », even a « new Hitler », but rarely accused for his social or economical policies that were sometimes socially rather progressive like in the cases of Libya, Syria, Yugoslavia or Iraq. If it was the case, the first dictators that should have been denounced by the « International community » would be the both non egalitarian and repressive absolute monarchies like Saudi Arabia, Qatar or the dictatorships of Azerbaïdjan, Honduras or Turkmenistan and a lot of other well considered governments by Western powers (Johnson, 2004, 2010). After Fukuyama proclaimed the « End of history », Huntington and his followers declared the « clash of civilizations »

(Fukuyama, 1992, Huntington, 1993, Couze, 2008). We have then to ask if now, in the really existing economically Global United world, there are still different civilizations and cultures or just one basically monolithic, individualistic, consumerist and capitalistic civilization divided only along lines between the rich and the poors, the owners and the excluded, even if some appearances give still the impression of cultural, national and religious diversity ?

« American way of life » is in fact reserved for an « exclusive » global society based on massive consuming, waste and exploitation of cheap labour worldwide, including now the labour forces of the US prison system. Daech islam is also reserved for an exclusive group of people, and so is Israel or the European Union. We must ask for example if there is basically within EU « difference of cultures » or rather a common rule that can be observed more clearly since the Greek crisis, with a rich core of EU excluding the vast masses pushed at the periphery, especially in its South and East flanks. Even if we observe that the local marginalised Greek for example social or political traditions fight for their survival. But, at least for the moment, we must note that such movements like Syryza for the Left or Golden Dawn for the right are rather caricature of the former Greek political culture and tradition. More or less the same conclusions can be done for the French National Front, the Polish Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc, the « new » French Communist Party or the German Die Linke. As it is the case with the neo-islamism promoted by Daech comparing to the Muslim Brotherhood from the time of Hassan el Banna or the Islamic revival proposed by Muhammad Iqbal. Most of the times, the political culture of proclaimed « anti-establihsment » movements looks rather like a « copy reaction » to the dominant neoliberal neoconservative discourse than the renewal of their own political tradition able to construct an alternative social culture. The same can be observed often when we compare the differences between the political offers of different nations at the world level.

When the European Economic Community (EEC) was founded, German debts were cancelled but that was not any more the case with Greece or other European countries who had and have to pay now usurious interests. Such a situation can be observed on a world scale creating then tensions, provoking wars and massive migrations. This can explain why the integration of immigrants, from both Eastern or Southern « civilization circles », was much easier to carry on during the dynamic years of progress just after 1918 and after 1945 up to the end of the seventies. So-called « Westerners » accept now, when the situation becomes very tense, to give to the needies some fish but they do not show any capacity to give fishing rod so the needy will be able to be economically on their own, to become independent from the debt trap, proxy wars, world prices and terms of trade (Gendron, 2007, Reinsdorf, 2009). EU opens its borders to migrant masses coming from countries plunged into wars that can be carried on because of the import of arms not produced in those countries but in the EU and USA, and later Russia. It looks then like a new old story of getting an extra young labour force able to compete with local older workers. Countries where real minimum wages, real salaries and real living conditions are stagnating or falling down for the poorer.

All this is linked with the fact that « post-modern » societies have most often lost their dynamics when leading social groups lost their creative imagination for a real sustainable development so people do not believe in the future of their society and

consequently do not have any more a sufficient birth rate, and this also is a cause for mass migrations. Very often then, « multiculturalism » became not a new reality but a new slogan for a globalized world where real culture and real diversity is vanishing within the same monolithic economical and social system. Real diversity is not mainly linked in fact with identity symbols, ethnical appearances or religious rituals, real diversity was always existing through history as a dynamic social and political culture promoting new more progressive ideas recovered by artistic trends and specific but changing national appearances.

Monolithic global « culture » with different purely formal « touches »

We have to ask if the « pidgin » language most young people use now and which is most of the time a mixture coming from the more literary language their parents learned at home and at school mixed with approximative and rather poor in its contents concepts taken from what British linguists do not name any more « English » but « Globish » can give birth to a real process of thinking, to a real cultural creativity. When all over the world people are listening to songs using similar styles, without understanding words, when people are wearing the same nylon clothes and « sport » shoes, eventually with a Western, an Islamic or another « touch », do this have any connection to what was defined in all civilizations as culture. Which « multi-culture » when North or South Americans, Europeans, Russians, Chinese or Arabs are consuming quite the same products, playing the same kind of violent videos games, making their shopping in the same types of malls where they buy the same world brands ? Is there then any concrete fundamental difference of culture, religion or ideology between a Saudi, a Canadian, a Brazilian or a Bangladeshi ? Except for his bank account, his basic situation, his basic needs, his basic tastes and his basic thoughts look all quite the same. A feeling of being a stranger in this world for the 99% of humankind. A feeling of complete alienation that can lead either to passivity or violence.

Since the Islamic circle is concentrating for geopolitical and geo-economical reasons world tensions, we must ask to what extent a « Muslim » nowadays is really developing social « values » making him different from a « Christian » or a « Buddhist ». In fact, a young Muslim, when he is « radical » will tell he is wearing a long « *qamis* » supposed to make him look like his prophet and differentiating him from a « Westerner ». But in fact, he does not really know what kind of cloth was really wearing the prophet Muhammad, and he cannot realize that he is wearing a nylon cloth produced by an overexploited Bangladeshi supposedly « fellow-Muslim » worker, he is walking with TV advertised Nike-style shoes imported from Thailand the prophet Muhammad did never dream about and he is wearing sun glasses imported from yet another country and produced by a firm belonging to an « unfaithful » he is supposed to compete with, if he is a « moderate », and to fight against if he is an « extremist ». What this all have to do with the social message and program's prophets were fighting for ? No prophet never asked to seat at the table of the privileged, the rich and the powerful and to look like them. What real difference then exists between the exclusivist discourse

of a California based « born again » TV Neo-Evangelist, a Saudi extremist preacher, a radical rabbi in the occupied West Bank or a Buddhist or Hindu extremist from Sri Lanka, India. China (Tibet) or Burma ? They are all promising a consumer paradise after life for the ones who will accept now the dominant social rules and avoid the terrible hell they experience …already now most of the times in their everyday senseless life, without any perspective and without any real collective future. In a situation where liberals, neo-liberals, Islamist, socialists or neo-conservatives do not propose any more a concrete response to this moral, intellectual, spiritual and philosophical desert.

When we use the concept of multiculturalism we have first to think about the meaning of the word « culture », and then ask what if there are real cultures taking part in the supposedly multicultural society ? Obviously, the level of knowledge of most Saudi like preachers, not to talk about Daech, demonstrates they have a complete ignorance about the main elements of culture such as philosophy, theology, anthropology, social sciences, not to talk about biology, psychology or logic. Leaving away art, paintings, music, poetry, etc. These people pretend to return to the roots of Islam but are not able to understand the cause of the dynamic of the first Muslim society. In fact, they reform the traditional Islam inherited from their ancestors creating then a « neo-Islamism » without roots in a typical « post-modernist » and « no future » way. We can see something very similar observing « born again » Christian preachers and most of the preachers of other religions we can observe on mass religious TV channels. When we observe political movements on the other side, we note also that very few liberal young leaders really know something about the early ideas of liberal thinkers as very few socialists know really something about the fundamental social methodology created by Karl Marx.

On the other side of the mirror, very few people belonging to the lower classes still know the living sense of the folklore rituals of their grand-parents. The world became in fact, with few exceptions, a gigantic « Indian reservation » where people cut from their traditions are showing for tourists the visible aspects of an already most of the time dead culture. And this creates frustrations first, then rage. We can even say that we all became « tourists » in this world, looking at somebody's else rituals just as we behave with our own traditions and cults which are in fact foreign to us. Observing most of the rituals linked with Christmas in officially more or less « Christian » societies we see that they have more to do with shopping activities and family meetings than with the mystic of Christ. American « melting pot » became in fact a real « success story » since it eliminated almost all over the world, including North Americans, any trace of fundamental, spiritual, intellectual, artistic and social differences, leaving just appearances of differences. The rage shown for example by some catholic or Neo-Protestant fundamentalists in Eastern Europe or in America, or by Muslim, Jewish or Buddhist fundamentalists in Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Burma or Sri Lanka is rather based on a lack of knowledge and an infinite despair. This has little to do with traditions which have been almost entirely eradicated, first by modernistic trends and most profoundly by the superficial consumer's « ethos » of life condemning humans to live isolated from any « eternal » value in an « eternal present » without any long term sense and perspective. And this creates huge frustrations provoking hate among people losing their faith and links with their elders.

When we compare the poetry of traditional Islamic thinkers with the almost materialistic understanding of paradise described by post-modern fundamentalists preachers, we can only note that they do not know what the word culture means, and that they do not know either what means Islamic culture, in « Islamic » countries or in Europe. The same thing happened earlier with the different branches of Christianity. Since the Muslim world is situated at the crossroad between the « rich » West and the « poor » Global South, contradictions based on economical inequalities are there more acute and cannot find a real alternative. We must compare this situation with the one existing in Mexico, where the Global South meets also the « North ». The extreme violence and the extreme social disintegration we observe now in the kingdom of drug gangs of Mexico can be compared to the extreme violence and social disintegration we observe in most Arab countries. This rather tends to show that real traditions and religions play a secondary role in this global scenario, or at least a superficial one. All territories situated at the limit between the still fascinating rich consumer's markets of the West and the marginalised and poor Southern countries behave in a quite similar way, even if the pretext of religion does not exist in the historically very secularized Mexico. We must ask then if there is any fundamental difference between the Mexican drug gangs and the violent « Islamic fundamentalists » captagon (Loumé, 2015, Khoder, 2016, Dinand, 2016) massive users and dealers ? We consider that the basic contradiction of our times is between « post-modernity » and « multiculturalism », since post-modernity is, as this word tells us, an intellectual concept created for « has been », when « culture » is a concept fundamentally linking the past with the future. The egoism and the despair of nowadays Western, Muslim or Indian « has been » creates a barrier against free thinking, creative thinking and creative culture. So when « post-modernistically » oriented leaders talk about « multiculturalism », they do not speak about culture in the real sense of this term, they speak about purely visible identity symbols that should divide people competing for jobs and goods but basically similar in their everyday behaviours.

Defining the concept of multiculturalism

Before giving any opinion concerning the choice between multiculturalism and monoculturalism we need then to define what exactly means the concept of multiculturalism. We have first to ask then what is culture ? Is culture just a different « look » or « touch » within the same basic social values, or is culture a collection of trends pushing toward social creativity on the base of different social, philosophical, ideological or spiritual principles in constant emulation ? We must ask if all existing nowadays extremist trends appearing in fact in each existing ideology and religion, from the « official » extreme right to the extreme left are not in fact part of what we could call an « extreme centre » vision based on the same « there is no alternative » policy. When we analyze process that characterized all decays in the history we should note that the real and creative multi/-/cultural aspect of the leading empires gave then way to formal diversities and oppositions recovering a growing monolithic social, political,

ideological and religious discourse recovering a growing concentration of wealth and power (Roy, 2008).

We must ask if there is now any basic difference between the neoliberal or secular credo telling that « there is no society, only individuals » and « new » religious credos telling to their faithful that they have just to think about their personal salvation through purely apparent rituals and charity acts based on an egoistic feeling searching a consumer paradise for themselves during their life or, at least, after their death, without any care about collective social issues. Such an individualistic consumer's ideology, with « Christian », « Islamic », « jewish » or « secularized » « look », has nothing to do with the prophetical appeals and with the struggle against usure located at the very base of all monotheistic faith and all secularized « post-religious » trends that appeared during the European Enlightenment.

In fact, all traditional existing cultures are summoned to accept to be reduced to strictly superficial « national », « ideological », « political » or « religious » differences, to something looking like a specific parcel containing the very same content, the very same culture :

» a life where people do not have to think about any universal mission,
» a consumerist and individualistic lifestyle compliant to the monolithic advertising messages propagated all over the globalized world,
» a non ending competition of individuals, nations and countries functioning on the very same ideological, economical and social bases.

No really competing alternative social programmes, no real cultural differences, no real new waves of creativity, whatever they are called, « secular » or « religious ». In fact a « monolithic multiculturalism » which is the contrary of the real diversity of cultures, thoughts and social programmes. The concept of multiculturalism has then to be redefined along with the concept of culture.

Real multiculturalism needs opposed social programmes

In most countries now, there is no much differences of social programmes between Christian democrats, liberals, socialists or nationalists and also Islamists. All major political currents lost their roots and, consequently, the differences between Christians, Muslims or atheists are dividing them most often inside their own « community » along strictly individual, moral, personal values on one side and the ones still searching in their « roots » what can be used to promote more collective, more social, more progressive and more creative and vivid principles. Everywhere humans have to deal now with the same universalised atmosphere of « end of history » and « no future ». We cannot then be surprised with the development of satanic like behaviours, of « heavy metals » groups, even when we analyse the supposedly « Christians » Breivik or Timothy Mc Veigh, the « Islamic » Daech death squads, the « Hindu » Tamil tigers or the ultra-nationalist Burmese Buddhist monks. In these cases as in many others, these have nothing to do with traditions and with the spirituality of each religion, in the same way Hitler's « national socialism » had not much to do with socialist basic

internationalist principles. As the Polish proverb says « Fish rots from the head » and this is the very situation we observe in the global world which is in fact rarely multicultural but basically monocultural because of leading elites promoting their « soft » monolithic ideology. Here we find the reasons for both migrations, self-confinements and gated cities. Is there any real difference between the born again Christian belief of a George W. Bush crusading in Iraq, the petro-Islamism of Saudi kings helping « moderate Islamists » in Syria, the extremist Iraqi born and Gulf funded « extremists » in the same Syria or Iraq, the Khmer rouge « Marxist » slaughters in Cambodia, the extreme right « Gladio organised » Bologne Railway Station terrorist attack and the murders of civilians religiously blessed by neo-tribal rabbis in the West Bank ? We have everywhere to deal with the results of massive wars, bombings, drones and terrorist attacks, not launched by local people but imported from outside.

There is not much differences between so called nationalists, religious fundamentalists or other « identity » trends which are superficial, even if violently opposed one to the other. They constitute in fact reactions against the « neo-polytheism » of our era, the fetishism of egos, goods and markets promoting the elites, the « happy few » on a world scale. Extreme right racists tend to promote « racial elite » and religious fundamentalists tend to promote charismatic preachers in a non very different logic. Their violence is based on real frustrations which are as logical as logical is the permanent « new nomadism » (Decrop, 2008, Management post moderne) from one country reduced to a poorer market to another country which seem to offer better prices and salaries.

Very few « nationalists » are proposing any new way of development or new methods of understanding social and economical issues than the ones realized by « globalists ». Advocating the closing of borders, extreme nationalists only difference with « globalists » is that they want to reserve the benefits of the same society on a strictly « national » base. We meet very rarely a « Satanist » racist, an « Islamist », a « born again neo-Protestant » or an « ultra-catholic » promoting an alternative social or economical system, and a fundamentally different system of shared social principles. Even if now Francis Fukuyama admits that there was no real « end of history » after the self-dissolution of the socialist block (Philips, 2008), we must acknowledge that very few are the ones, including most of the pretending to be « multiculturalists », who try to analyze and understand the blocking of the global dynamic and who try to invent real new ways of development that will not reduce culture to passive consumption of goods. Culture is an active and creative process but most of the « values » spread by global media and advertising corporations are anti-social, inhuman, strongly individualistic, anti-feminist, subliminally or openly pornographic, and then fundamentally violent.

Speaking about Human rights and dignity, we have to ask why most of the well known feminist organizations are not denouncing advertisings transforming women in sexual toys to catch consumers. A costly war was launched theoretically to liberate Afghan women but in the same time very few campaign against firms advertising half naked female objects « seducing » half idiot muscular men dreaming to buy a more « energetic » car, male underpants or perfume. All « citizens » are supposed to consume and then to be indebted, what put them in a situation of dependency rather similar to

the one of the former subjects of a Lord than the one of a free citizen in a real democracy. All this is contrary to what was always defined in Europe as « culture ».

Since very few politicians or religious leaders are proposing any way to promote a society of dignity, it is then logic when lost people try to find a way back toward an idealized « tribal », « pure » or « mythical » paradise. During the whole human history, societies were dynamic when really different cultural trends were coexisting and looking together forward on the base of tolerance and common social goals. Here is the base of what we define as the real multiculturalism based on some common principles according to the interests of different social stratas and cultural groups.

Migrants, archaism and progres

Tensions happening now are not linked with the diversity of cultures, languages, ideologies or religions, even if some behaviours can look specific, « archaic », reactionary and « inhuman », but this could be overcome in a really dynamic and progressive society. As it was for example the case in Europe for immigrants during the first thirty years after the Second World war as it was also the case then in most of the « multicultural » Third World countries because economical and social progress were then on the world agenda, both in the East and in the West. Now, on the contrary, there is not any more tolerated real diversity but only the appearances of diversity under a monolithic social, economic and political order. The current situation creates huge tensions and frustrations that provoke self-confinements due to the fact that there is no real social mobility, no social promotion but a situation where in most cases, in developed or under-developed countries, poors are getting poorer and rich are getting richer, inside every country and between countries. This explains why there is a need for new cultural hegemons able to propose solutions to this dead end situation creating unending conflicts between people, ethnical and social groups or countries sharing most often the same basic economical and social values carried on by some happy few oligarchs. Here we find the real source of racism or religious fanaticism built on real existing social frustrations. Islam for example was one of the most pro-scientific and pro-social religion since in the Middle ages it invented free universities and free hospitals with systems of scholarships for the poorest (Nagamia, 2003, Noshwrawy, 2007). The Fez Qarawiyin University was even founded by a woman in the 10th century. This experience was transferred later to Europe during Renaissance where it lead to the development of science, freedom and universalism. Universalism based on something that can be called « multiculturalism ». The regressive movements we observe now in the Muslim world have to be linked with the regressive movements we observe in richer countries event if, because of their relative wealth, these are still not submitted to the same degree of social frustrations and violence we observe in several Muslim and third world countries. We have to note also that if the late waves of migrants in Europe created polemics and tensions, nobody here seems to know that, for example, a little and relatively poor country like Syria accepted from the beginning of the 20th century up to 2011 several hundred thousands Armenian refugees during the first world

war, also several hundred thousand Greeks, Circassians, Turkish Kurds, later several hundred Palestinian refugees, more than half a million of Lebanese refugees during the 2006 invasion of Lebanon and more than one million Iraqis after the invasion of 2003. All these refugees of different ethnical and religious belongings were accepted, fed and housed by local people, and Syrian State did not even beg for any foreign help, because it was a question of honour, a notion forgotten by rich bourgeois. Now it is the turn of the tiny Lebanon to accept more than half million Syrian refugees rejoining the already living there Palestinian and Armenian former refugees (Moaz, 2015). Rich Europe, not to talk about USA, did not show so much solidarity comparing to these countries. We must know that the big majority of all refugees and migrants in the world are located in poor Third World countries and we should note that these millions are relatively rarely victims of violence coming from the resident population. We must then ask if Europe, not to speak about USA, is ready to a real « multiculturalism » in spite of official discourses.

Europe was during the last centuries something like a laboratory for better or worse dynamical trends but now its situation reminds us rather the Polish commonwealth at the time of the Saxon dynasty when its elites were pretending that existing institutions were perfect and that people had just to restore old social and political recipes that were supposed to bloom under a « golden liberty » that was proclaimed such as an Tibetan mantra but that did not exist in fact any more. For the more enlightened spirits of the time, this discourse was just hypocrisy under appearances of liberty and democracy. This regressive situation lead finally to the creation of a real program of reforms proclaimed by the « Kollataj's Forge » ? In fact, these enlightened spirits concentrated then on the issue how to give a just place to Jews, religious minorities, bourgeois and peasants confronted with an unending feudal despair. What we can call today « multiculturalism », but a constructive multiculturalism.

If we look at France during the thirties of the XXth century, we observe there too that the Polish, Jewish from Eastern Europe or Italian immigrants were then submitted to much worst treatments than nowadays immigrants. Historical researches showed that Poles, Jews or Italians were often accused then by the press of the same « sins » like now the new migrants : (catholic) religious fundamentalism, strong tendency to banditism and rapes (Ponty, 1988). French newspapers were then full of articles denouncing immigrants supposedly incapable to integrate in the democratic, secularized and tolerant French Republic. At the beginning of the thirties, when unemployment raised, legal Polish immigrants were often given 24 hours to sell all their belongings at very low prices, and to take with them only one suitcase per person so to be sent back to Poland by special trains. Remaining immigrants for a large part integrated later to the French society, but it did happen first during the Second World war when they constituted an important part of the local resistance movement and after the war when they took an active part to the reconstruction of the country. This situation was similar to the one experienced by immigrants from African countries up to the crisis of the late seventies, even if the post-colonial racism did not die.

Nowadays, the new crisis we experience created new conditions for racism and xenophobia but the past experiences shows that it is possible to overcome these problems as soon as leading forces try to find a dynamic solution to the current blocked situation.

The only question is : do we need a new form of fascism and a world war to reach it ? We must ask now this question observing international tensions and growing intolerance combined with the inefficiency of government programs tending to promote tolerance and multiculturalism not questioning the very social and economical causes of frustrations, and then racism or xenophobia. The word « culture » constitutes in this context a key word that has to be re-invented in its really authentic and profound sense. Real culture is always both « national » and « universal ». When « multiculturalism » will mean exactly this, it will be able to open new creative perspectives.

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